Fray Toribio de Benavente “Motolinía” — Historia de los Indios de la Nueva España — 1541–1545

(Franciscan Chronicle, Nueva España, Archivo General de Indias, Seville — Ms. Patronato 23)

> “They believed in a lord of heaven and earth, whom they called Tloque Nahuaque and Ipalnemohuani — that is, ‘the One by whom we live.’
>
> They confessed that He made all things, that He sustained all life, and that He was without beginning or end.
>
> These words show that the Devil did not erase from their hearts all knowledge of God, though he led them into error through many false gods.”

> Motolinía observed that among the elders, this name was spoken with great reverence, as one would utter a secret. He judged that such belief, though clouded by ignorance, was a trace of the same Creator whom the Gospel proclaims.”

Filed: Franciscan Mission Chronicles, Vol. II, Nueva España (1541–1545), fol. 128–132.

Author: Fray Toribio de Benavente, called “Motolinía” (“the poor one”).

Repository: Archivo General de Indias, Seville.

Summary:

Motolinía’s mid-sixteenth-century chronicle records that the Nahua revered Tloque Nahuaque, “the One by whom we live,” as creator of heaven and earth.

He took this as evidence that divine memory survived among them before Spain’s arrival — the lingering spark of the same God he came to preach.